



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY,
TRADE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program



1986-2006

20th Anniversary Report

W A S H I N G T O N E C E A P

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1986-2006

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1986-2006 on eceap early childhood education & assistance program

The Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program is a whole-child, comprehensive school readiness program serving low-income three- and four-year-old children in Washington State.

The Legislature established ECEAP in 1985 as a community-based program to help low-income and at-risk children succeed in school and life. Communities design programs that fit their local needs within the ECEAP Performance Standards. Contractors receive funding and technical assistance from the State ECEAP Office. In 2005, ECEAP operated through 33 local contractors - school districts, educational service districts, local governments, nonprofit organizations, community action programs, and community colleges.

In the past 20 years, ECEAP has provided high quality services to more than 118,000 children and their families.



Benefits:

- For every dollar invested in high quality preschool programs, taxpayers save up to \$8 in future costs.
- Children who participate in high quality early learning programs are more likely to be at grade level in achievement, 50 percent less likely to need special education services, and 25 percent less likely to be held back by the end of third grade.
- Participants also have lower rates of teen pregnancy, decreased delinquency, higher graduation rates, and higher rates of employment.

www.earlychildhoodfinance.org

Education goes way beyond ABC's and 123's. Because many factors affect a child's development and learning ability, ECEAP has three interactive components:

- Early Education
- Family Support and Parent Involvement
- Health and Nutrition

Washington is one of only three states in the nation that offers these comprehensive services.

1986-2006 on partners - community partnerships

Community partners play an important role in the delivery of a comprehensive, high quality preschool program. ECEAP programs partner with schools to support the transition from preschool to kindergarten and to access special education services. Many childcare centers offer ECEAP during part of their daily routine, and some ECEAP programs offer wrap-around childcare for families that need full day care. Partnering with a comprehensive preschool model like ECEAP allows childcare providers to deliver enhanced services.



Other common partnerships include:

- Community colleges that offer basic or continuing education for parents/guardians.
- Volunteer services that link community members with ECEAP classrooms.
- Medical, dental, and mental health providers that offer sliding fee scales and come to ECEAP sites to provide services.
- Schools, colleges, and churches that provide classroom space at little or no cost.
- Tribal organizations that partner in outreach and recruitment activities and provide tribal resources.

When local organizations and ECEAP work together, families and communities thrive.

1986-2006 on education in the classroom

When you walk into an ECEAP preschool classroom, you might see:

- An organized classroom where children can help themselves to materials that expand their cognitive, creative, language, social-emotional, and physical development.
- Children practicing decision-making and follow-through skills by choosing their own activity, figuring out which materials they need, and problem solving glitches.



- Teachers observing individual children and taking notes, so they can plan learning experiences that meet each child's needs.
- Children listening to stories, playing rhyming games, and talking about letter sounds to prepare for reading.
- Groups dancing, climbing, running, and jumping to build strong bodies and counter the obesity epidemic.
- Children strengthening the small muscle skills and eye-hand coordination that they will need for writing, as they shape playdough, string beads, button dress-up clothes, and paint pictures.

1986-2006 on education in the classroom, cont.

School Readiness is Multidimensional

Of 398 Washington State kindergarten teachers surveyed, 94% rated the following characteristics as most important for children beginning kindergarten:

- Physical health
- Peer interaction
- Following directions
- Self-control/impulse control
- Verbal communication

First-Ever Statewide Kindergarten Teacher Survey on School Readiness
- Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

- Teachers helping children understand each other's point of view and negotiate conflicts — social skills they will use for a lifetime.
- Children building with blocks, measuring food for recipes, and setting the table for lunch – getting familiar with counting, fractions, comparative sizes, and geometry while having fun.
- Children experimenting with science as they explore nature, see which toys float or sink, or experiment with mixing baking soda and vinegar.
- Teachers supporting children when they are angry, scared, or jealous – so that they learn to express feelings appropriately and understand the feelings of others.

- Discussions about families, participation in cultural events, or field trips to local businesses to build the foundation for social studies.

- Teachers engaging in intentional discussions with children to expand their vocabularies, knowledge, and higher order thinking.
- ECEAP parents volunteering, which increases their comfort with schools so that they can support and advocate for their child's academic success throughout K-12.



1986-2006 principles of family support on families

Enhancing the capacity of families to be successful is an essential component of ECEAP. Local communities serving ECEAP families use a family support approach. In fact, the Washington State Legislature considered family support so critical in providing high quality services to families they put family support principles into statute in 1992.

RCW 28A.215.110 defines "Family support services" as providing opportunities for parents to:

- Participate actively in their child's learning.
- Build on their knowledge of child development and parenting skills.
- Further their education and training.
- Increase their ability to access needed community services.
- Enhance their self-reliance and confidence.



Family Support Principles:

- Local ECEAP staff develop relationships with families based on equality and respect.
- ECEAP services are designed to enhance families' capacity to support the growth and development of all family members.
- Families are resources to each other, to other families, to programs, and to their communities.
- Programs affirm and strengthen families' cultural, racial, and linguistic identities, and enhance their ability to function in a multicultural society.
- ECEAP is embedded in communities and contributes to the community building process.
- Programs advocate with families for fair, responsive, and accountable services and systems.
- Local staff work with families to mobilize formal and informal resources to support family development.
- ECEAP services are flexible and responsive to emerging family and community issues.
- Family support principles are evident in all program activities, including planning, governance, and administration.

Adapted from Family Support America

1986-2006 on families - parent empowerment

ECEAP strengthens families and supports parents and guardians in their role as primary educators of their children. Teachers encourage parents to volunteer in the classroom. They work with parents to establish learning goals for their children. Parents can also participate in home-learning activities with their children, attend parenting classes, and take part in ECEAP family events.

Cultivating Leadership

ECEAP grows parent leaders that shape schools and communities across Washington State. ECEAP helps connect parents to leadership opportunities in the community and encourages parents to:

- Take part in program governance.
- Organize community events.
- Lead local advocacy efforts.



Local ECEAP staff encourage and guide parents in achieving their personal and family goals. While more than 70 percent of ECEAP parents are employed, their incomes may not provide a living wage. Families work hard and yet often struggle to meet basic needs. Staff help parents access educational opportunities, job training, and health resources. When basic needs come up short, staff work side by side with parents to secure shelter, medical providers, food, and clothing.

1986-2006 on health nutrition and physical activity

Children learn about healthy eating and staying active from adults around them. Parents and teachers strive to model wise food choices that help balance messages in advertising and media. Teachers involve children in active play that gets them up and moving.

Healthy eating includes:

- Having sufficient food.
- Choosing healthy foods.
- Preparing those foods in a way that meets different family needs.

In ECEAP classrooms, children and adults eat healthy snacks and meals together. Meals provided in ECEAP meet at least one-third of a child's daily nutritional requirements. This is vital, since for many children it may be the only nutritious meal they receive in the day. In addition to providing essential nutrition,

Washington Promotes Two Key Nutrition Messages:

- Eat five or more fruits and vegetables each day.
- Get daily physical activity.



teachers use mealtimes to help children build vocabulary and social skills. They encourage children to explore new foods, build self-help skills, and practice cooperative behaviors. Children learn to make simple snacks, set the table, pass and choose foods, and help tidy up.

In ECEAP, children and families also learn about the key messages of healthy eating and physical activity during family events. They explore them through fun activities and making healthy snacks together.

1986-2006 on health medical and dental health

Children need to be healthy for optimal learning. Children often come to ECEAP needing medical and dental care. It is hard to learn with pain from decaying teeth or vision problems. In 2005, 26 percent of ECEAP families reported having no medical or dental insurance when their child was enrolled. Local ECEAP staff help families access medical and dental care for each child.



At the Beginning of the 2005 School Year:

- 63 percent of ECEAP children had current medical exams, while 34 percent had no historical exam recorded.
- 44 percent of ECEAP children had current dental exams, while 49 percent had no historical exam recorded.

Data taken from the ECEAP Management System, December 2005.

Local ECEAP staff also help families problem-solve transportation needs, work schedules, and other conflicts standing in the way of getting their child adequate health care. This is critical, since some children have never seen a doctor or dentist. In some communities, access to medical and dental care is just not available to low-income families. The struggle to find health care options still affects about ten percent of children and families.

1986-2006 on business – support from the business community

Investing in high quality early childhood education makes good business sense. In fact, ECEAP began at the urging of the business community. The Washington Roundtable, a nonprofit public policy organization representing Washington's major employers, first recommended a state early learning program for at-risk children. Business was interested because of the evidence that early education and family support build a stronger, more competitive workforce.

For every dollar invested in early education, the state saves \$8 in future costs. This is because high quality early learning programs like ECEAP are proven to reduce special education and criminal justice costs. As the graduates move into adulthood, they have higher



"Our frame of reference is economic, not social. We think of early childhood development as economic development in human capital. The studies show that the public gets a better return on its investment if government focuses its resources on human capital (education, especially education in the very early years) than on physical capital (businesses)."

- Art Rolnick, Director of Research and Public Affairs at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis

high school graduation rates, employment rates, and earnings.¹

Washington businesses actively demonstrate their firm belief in the benefits of early learning programs. Governor Gregoire's new Early Learning Council was formed in 2005 to improve the quality of early learning statewide. Membership includes representation from major philanthropic and business organizations, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Wells Fargo Bank, and Boeing.

1986-2006 on business – support from the business community

Corporations and individual business leaders also provide strong financial support for early learning. Recently, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation announced a focused 10-year investment of up to \$90 million in early learning programs. In addition, the Foundation for Early Learning, with financial support from the business community, has awarded \$3 million statewide in grants. The Foundation focuses on fostering exemplary programs in early learning and places a strong emphasis on collaboration among community and state organizations, businesses, parents, caregivers, and policy makers. It has been instrumental in building the state's early care and learning capacity.

In an emerging public/private partnership, business will continue to work closely with early learning providers, public servants, and legislators to plan the most important investments we can make in Washington's future.

"Investing our time and resources in early childhood education and school readiness efforts is essential to building a stronger community and maintaining a world-class region."

- Bob Watt, Vice President of Community and Government Affairs at the Boeing Company



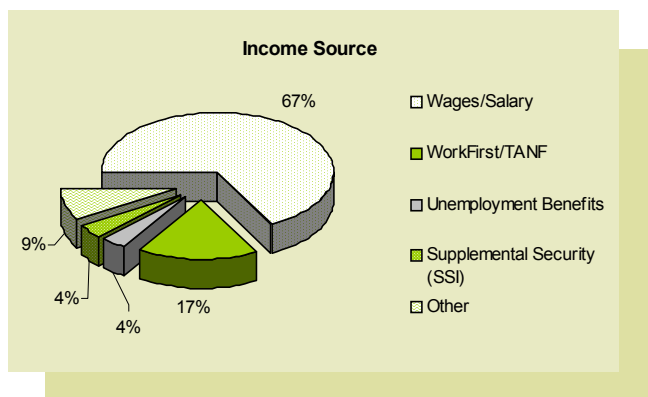
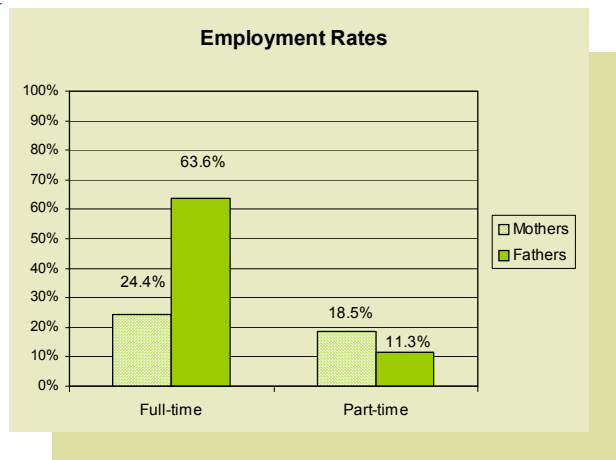
¹ Resources:

A Proposal for Achieving High Returns on Early Childhood Development, by Rob Grunewald and Arthur Rolnick, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, 2005. www.minneapolisfed.org/research/studies/earlychild/draft_ecd_proposal.pdf

Exceptional Returns: Economic, Fiscal, and Social Benefits of Investment in Early Childhood Development, Robert G. Lynch, Economic Policy Institute, 2004. [www.epinet.org/books/exceptional/exceptional_returns_\(full\).pdf](http://www.epinet.org/books/exceptional/exceptional_returns_(full).pdf)

The Productivity Argument for Investing in Young Children, James J. Heckman and Dimitriy V. Masterov, Committee for Economic Development, 2004. www.ced.org/docs/summary/summary_heckman.pdf

1986-2006 on eligibility - family income



The primary income source for nearly 70 percent of our ECEAP families is from wages and salaries. Half of our ECEAP children live in two-parent households, and most of these have at least one working parent, the majority of whom work full-time.

Data taken from ECEAP Management System, March 2005

Families are eligible for ECEAP services when their income is at or below 110 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Up to ten percent of children enrolled may come from families who are not income eligible, but are at risk for school failure based on developmental or environmental factors.

In actuality, the majority of our families have incomes at or below 80 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. For a family of four this would be an annual income of just \$15,480 or less.

110% of 2005 Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States & District of Columbia*

Size of Family Unit	Annual Income
1	\$10,527
2	\$14,113
3	\$17,699
4	\$21,285
5	\$24,871
6	\$28,457
7	\$32,043
8	\$35,629

**Updated annually by the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services.*

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on budget - 2005 funded enrollment by county

county	FY 2005 funding	# of ECEAP sites	FEL*	cumulative enrollment**
Adams	\$291,671	3	60	72
Asotin	\$501,848	3	77	77
Benton	\$815,604	5	151	167
Chelan	\$458,233	3	82	98
Clallam	\$274,700	1	41	48
Clark	\$1,879,631	14	338	418
Columbia	\$100,506	1	18	21
Cowlitz	\$559,403	1	86	93
Douglas	\$451,340	3	71	82
Ferry	\$64,948	2	13	11
Franklin	\$415,163	3	86	92
Garfield	\$0	0	0	0
Grant	\$531,023	3	110	121
Grays Harbor	\$546,168	11	113	145
Island	\$439,310	3	78	112
Jefferson	\$67,000	1	10	8
King	\$4,782,502	31	910	1,061
Kitsap	\$1,225,811	7	216	270
Kittitas	\$86,996	1	18	17
Klickitat	\$0	0	0	0
Lewis	\$398,756	4	66	73
Lincoln	\$94,924	3	19	24
Mason	\$215,473	2	36	44
Okanogan	\$242,095	1	49	56
Pacific	\$343,821	2	66	81
Pend Oreille	\$0	0	0	0
Pierce	\$5,394,141	31	1,112	1,303
San Juan	\$124,160	4	22	25
Skagit	\$319,500	4	66	76
Skamania	\$120,609	1	18	20
Snohomish	\$3,140,604	29	644	784
Spokane	\$2,336,302	22	483	558
Stevens	\$84,932	3	17	29
Thurston	\$598,535	6	100	123
Wahkiakum	\$121,029	1	24	25
Walla Walla	\$299,671	1	62	65
Whatcom	\$510,852	3	78	93
Whitman	\$423,555	7	70	82
Yakima	\$2,085,779	12	384	454
Total	\$30,346,597	232	5,794	6,828

*Funded enrollment level is the number of slots for which each contractor is funded. Each slot serves one child at a time.

**A portion of this population is quite mobile. As these children exit the program, new children are enrolled from program waiting lists. Therefore, the cumulative enrollment can be higher than the funded enrollment level.

1986-2006

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